

Message Text

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43

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00

INSE-00 DODE-00 SY-05 AID-05 SP-02 L-03 /031 W

----- 002624

R 300837Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3244

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 2474

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREP, MY, VS

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

1. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE SAMPATKUMAR MET WITH DCM AND CONSOFF ON APRIL 29 REGARDING APPROXIMATELY 100 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ON THREE BOATS OFF COAST OF EAST MALAYSIA NEAR KUALA KUNGAN. ACCORDING TO SAMPATKUMAR, REFUGEES ESCAPED FROM VIETNAM O/A JAN 76 AND HAVE LANDED AT VARIOUS TIMES IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOWED SSHORE BY MALAYSIAN AUTHORITIES EXCEPT UNDER EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES (E.G., CHILDBIRTH). ON BASIS SAMPATJUMAR'S CONTACT WITH REFUGEES AND HIS EVALUATION THEIR CASES, HE BELIEVES THAT MANY WOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR PAROLE INTO U.S. BASED ON OLD CRITERIA WHICH TERMINATED OCT 31. EMBASSY HAS HAD NO CONTACT WITH REFUGEES.

2. DCM INFORMED SAMPATKUMAR THAT WHILE MEMBERS EMBASSY STAFF SYMPATHETIC TO PLIGHT OF HUMANS IN DISTRESS, WE HAD NOT RECEIVED NEWLY FORMULATED CRITERIA WHICH WE UNDERSTOOD WOULD BE COMING FROM DEPT. WE FEARED THAT OVERT ACTION ON OUR PART TO INTERVIEW OR OTHERWISE ENCOURAGE REFUGEES WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED BY MALAYSIAN AUTHORITIES AND COULD FALSELY RAISE HOPES OF REFUGEES WHO MIGHT BE UNABLE TO QUALIFY. IF WE WERE TO APPROACH
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MALAYSIANS TO REQUEST CONTACT WITH REFUGEES, MALAYSIANS

WOULD CONSIDER IT GESTURE OF USG WILLINGNESS ACCEPT
MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF GROUP. DCM AGREED, HOWEVER, TO
SEND INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPARTMENT.

3. SAMPATKUMAR ALSO INFORMED DCM THAT HE HAS NOT APPROACHED
ANY OTHER GOVTS TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF RESETTLEMENT
OF REFUGEES OUTSIDE U.S.

4. BIO DATA AND OTHER QUALIFYING INFO RECEIVED FROM
UNHCR ON REFUGEES USUALLY LACKS SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO
ENABLE EMBASSY ASSESS CASES OR PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFO
TO DEPT. ON ALLEGED FAMILY MEMBERS IN U.S. TO VERIFY
RELATIONSHIPS. CONSEQUENTLY, INTERVIEWS BY EMBASSY
OFFICER APPEARS ONLY METHOD OBTAIN REQUIRED DATA.
DESPITE THE DANGERS DESCRIBED IN PARA 2, WE RECOMMEND
THAT DEPARTMENT INSTRUCT US TO APPROACH GOM FOR PER-
MISSION TO SEND CONSULAR OFFICER TO INTERVIEW REFUGEES.

5. IN ADDITION TO 100 ON BOATS, THERE ARE 24 REFUGEES
AT KUANTAN, SOME OF WHOM MAY HAVE CLOSE RELATIONS IN
STATES. THESE PEOPLE ARE UNDER PRESSURE FROM MALAYSIAN
AUTHORITIES TO LEAVE ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NO PLACE TO
GO. WE ALSO RECOMMEND THAT WE BE INSTRUCTED TO
APPROACH GOM ABOUT SENDING CONSULAR OFFICER TO INTERVIEW
THEM.

6. AND FOR THE LONGER RUN--IT IS CLEAR THAT A
TRICKLE OF ESCAPEES WILL CONTINUE TO ARRIVE HERE (AS
WELL AS SINGAPORE AND INDONESIA) BY SMALL BOAT. GIVEN
THE NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE NOW IN THE UNITED STATES, IT
IS INEVITABLE THAT MANY OF THEM WILL HAVE SOME KIND OF
RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEBODY IN THE U.S. THE POLICY OF
THE GOM IS CLEAR, ALTHOUGH NOT PUBLIC: THEY ARE
ACCEPTING MUSLIMS. SAMPATKUMAR TELLS US THAT IN
ADDITION TO 1500 MUSLIMS (MOSTLY FROM CAMBODIA) ALREADY
RESETTLED HERE, HE UNDERSTANDS THAT GOM HAS TOLD RTG
IT WILL ACCEPT ANOTHER 1,000. THEY WILL NOT ACCEPT
NON-MUSLIMS. WHAT IS OUR POLICY?
UNDERHILL

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